

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 THE HA 01114 030739Z
ACTION NODS-00

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R 021613Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2156

S E C R E T THE HAGUE 1114

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, PARM, MNUC
SUBJ: FEBRUARY 24 NAC CONSULTATION: ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPONS (ERW)

REF: THE HAGUE 1085

1. AS WE MIGHT HAVE ANTICIPATED DUTCH WILL FIND IT DIFFICULT
IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO FULLY SUPPORT US THREE-STEP PROPOSAL
ON ERW PRESENTED FEB 24 IN BRUSSELS.

2. FOREGOING WAS ESSENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTER VAN DER KLAUW'S
REMARKS TO ME DURING FAREWELL CALL THIS MORNING. HE EXPLAINED
THAT GON COULD SUPPORT FIRST TWO STEPS OF PROPOSAL BUT NOT
ENDORSE DEPLOYMENT NOW FOR TWO YEARS HENCE. EVEN IF THE GOVERNMENT
COULD COMMIT ITSELF TO TOTAL SUPPORT, WHICH HE THOUGHT MOST
UNLIKELY GIVEN MINORITY POSITION OF LIBERAL MINISTERS,
IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN PARLIAMENTARY APPROVAL.
DEBATE EARLIER THIS WEEK REPORTED IN REFTEL IS EVIDENCE TO
THIS EFFECT.

3. SAYING THAT WHILE IN THEORY THE CABINET HAD A FREE HAND
IN PRINCIPLE ON THIS QUESTION, VAN DER KLAUW POINTED OUT THAT
IN FACT MAJORITY VIEW IN PARLIAMENT WAS OPPOSED TO INTRO-
DUCTION OF ERW AND GOVERNMENT WOULD BE HOSTAGE TO PARLIAMENTARY
DISAPPROVAL. QTE THINKING ALOUD UNQTE HE SAID IT WAS POSSIBLE

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THAT IN TWO-YEAR INTERVAL BETWEEN PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT
OF ERW ATTITUDES HERE COULD CHANGE AND INDEED MIGHT IF, AS
HE ANTICIPATED, SOVIETS PROVE UNRESPONSIVE TO RECIPROCAL
ACTION. HE POINTED OUT THAT COALITION PARTNER CDA IS DIVIDED
ON THE ISSUE AND THAT OVER A PERIOD OF TIME IT MIGHT COALESCE
TO MORE POSITIVE VIEW. PROBLEM NOW IS THAT GON CANNOT COMMIT
ITSELF TO SUPPORT US IN FULL MEASURE.

4. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, VAN DER KLAUW SAID THIS WOULD BE POSITION DUTCH WOULD TAKE AT NEXT NAC. HE EVIDENCED PERSONAL DISTRESS AND SAID HE WISHED SITUATION WERE OTHERWISE BECAUSE HE PERSONALLY WANTED TO JOIN WITH US BUT HAD TO RECOGNIZE POLITICAL REALITY NOW PRESENT HERE. HE ACKNOWLEDGED ALSO THAT SINCE ISSUE DOES NOT CONFRONT ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS, MENTIONING DENMARK AND NORWAY, OUTCOME OF ALLIANCE DISCUSSIONS COULD RENDER DUTCH WITH ONLY NEGATIVE VOICE. HE SOUNDED ALMOST APOLOGISTIC FOR ROLE IN WHICH DUTCH WOULD BE CAST. WHILE IT WOULD SATISFY PREVAILING PUBLIC OPINION IN THE COUNTRY, IT WAS UNDESIRABLE POSITION FOR NETHERLANDS IN ALLIANCE AFFAIRS.

5. DEPARTMENT PLEASE REPEAT TO USNATO AND OTHER ADDRESSEES AS APPROPRIATE.
MCCLOSKEY

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NNN

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